

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Action for Sustainable Living Limited, held on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2005**

**Present:** Alan Boyd (minutes), Sue Hare, Steve Knight, Anna O'Sullivan, Josh Steiner, Claire Wheeler, Chris Wright

**Apologies:** Mary Wright

### **1. Minutes of the meeting 20<sup>th</sup> May 2005**

The notes were agreed to be a correct record. There were no matters arising.

### **2. History of Action for Sustainable Living (AfSL)**

Chris Wright described how the company had been founded on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003, the founder members having met for about a year prior to this. The initial idea was to help people take the "next steps" towards living more sustainably. There was interest from contacts in local authorities, but they wanted something proven. Chorlton was identified as a suitable place for a pilot project to demonstrate what could be possible, based on local knowledge and the share of the vote by the Green party in council elections. A questionnaire survey in Unicorn Grocery showed that there was indeed scope for a project in Chorlton - people were enthusiastic about the idea, and although knowledgeable about some issues this did not often extend to the full range of issues they were asked about.

AfSL has been a great success in Chorlton. We have learned as we have gone along, and there is now more emphasis on group working as a means to finding local solutions to problems. We have gained funding from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Environmental Action Fund (EAF) to continue the project in Chorlton, and to extend it to Hulme and Old Trafford, with 2 additional sustainability consultants, Josh Steiner and Claire Wheeler. We need to match the DEFRA funding with volunteer time and funding from other sources. We have just applied to the Big Lottery for a grant to cover this and to employ a development worker to support the sustainability consultants. We should know the outcome of the funding bid in December.

### **3. Review of the last year**

Anna O'Sullivan, the sustainability consultant for Chorlton, described some of AfSL's achievements and learning from the last year. Useful partnerships had been made nationally and locally, with particularly good working relationships with Manchester Friends of the Earth and Manchester Environmental Resource Centre Initiative (MERC I). There had been lots of publicity in local newspapers, and this had proved valuable as a source of reassurance for people, helping them to trust us. AfSL had also worked closely with community groups, such as Chorlton Civic Society and Whalley Range Forum, and with schools, such as Oswald Road and Chorlton High. 17 people had volunteered with AfSL, plus another 20 with Fairtrade Chorlton, one of the projects that AfSL has instigated and helped to support. A structured training programme for volunteers is in the process of being put together, following a successful bid to Manchester's Community Chest fund. Affiliate partnerships with 15 organisations had been agreed, and these were providing another source of income.

Various policies had been developed, including ones relating to volunteers, equal opportunities, safety at work, and an ecological policy for AfSL itself so that our activities are as sustainable as possible.

Anna had kept up to date with developments in sustainability across the wide spectrum that AfSL covers, through research and training. Sources of information included magazines, the internet and personal accounts from people Anna had met. She had attended 2 courses: a weekend about renewable energy, and a week long train the trainer course.

AfSL had helped establish Fairtrade Chorlton in December 2004. A website had been set up, and an application for Chorlton to become a Fairtrade area had just been submitted, with informal feedback being that it was likely to be successful.

Anna had also begun work to set up a Recycling Action Group. People had shown interest in 4 areas:

- Batteries
- Fashion
- Timber
- After school recycling club

And Anna was confident that at least some of these ideas would come to fruition.

Anna had also been doing individual home visits as well as this group work.

### **Financial situation**

Chris Wright presented AfSL's detailed profit and loss account for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March, which showed a total expenditure of just under £16,000. He also presented the budget for AfSL's work in 2005/06. The total budget is £110,200, of which 50% will be provided by DEFRA. Short-term priorities were to arrange office accommodation as appropriate, and to set up a membership scheme, to include benefits such as a newsletter.

### **Election of Directors**

AfSL needed to have at least 2 directors. It was agreed to re-elect Alan Boyd and Mary Wright as directors.